



Central Placement Policy: Clare County Council Assessment and Placement Service for Homeless Individuals

This Policy was adopted by Clare County Council at the Monthly meeting held on July 10th, 2023.

The following policy and procedure document refers to the placement of persons presenting as Homeless seeking emergency accommodation in Co. Clare, for which Clare County Council co-ordinate and have sole responsibility. The Assessment and Placement Service (APS) aims to be the first point of contact for any individual and family who find themselves homeless or at risk of becoming homelessness. This Service is operated by Clare County Council and forms part of the Clare Homeless Action Team.

Definition of Homelessness:

The relevant statutory provisions regarding homelessness are provided under Section 2 and Section 10 of the Housing Act 1988,

Housing Act 1988:

A person shall be regarded by a housing authority as being homeless for the purposes of this Act if—

(a) there is no accommodation available which, in the opinion of the authority, he, together with any other person who normally resides with him or who might reasonably be expected to reside with him, can reasonably occupy or remain in occupation of, or

(b) he is living in a hospital, county home, night shelter or other such institution, and is so living because he has no accommodation of the kind referred to in paragraph (a),

and he is, in the opinion of the authority, unable to provide accommodation from his own resources.

Section 10 of the Act of 1988 provides:

A housing authority may, subject to such regulations as may be made by the Minister under this section:

- (a) make arrangements, including financial arrangements, with a body approved of by the Minister for the purposes of section 5 for the provisions by that body of accommodation for a homeless person*
- (b) provide a homeless person with such assistance, including financial assistance, as the authority consider appropriate, or*
- (c) rent accommodation, arrange lodgings or contribute to the cost of such accommodation or lodgings for a homeless person*

(10) A housing authority may, while making enquiries to enable them to determine if a person is homeless, exercise the powers provided for above

It is the Housing Authority that must form the requisite opinion, following an assessment of need, on whether the criterion as set out in Section 2 is fulfilled. The decision to provide emergency accommodation supports rests within the competence and expertise of the Housing Authority and is made within the context of available resources and competing demands on those resources

(Mid-West Region - Homeless Action Plan 2022-2025 Page7)

Housing Legislative Framework for Homelessness

- Housing Act 1988
- Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009
- Mid-West Regional Homelessness Action Plan

Once eligibility is established by the Homeless Action Team, in conjunction with the Housing Act, the individual and/or family are offered a comprehensive assessment in a private and supportive environment. The assessment is the foundation, which will influence the level and type of support given to each individual.

Homeless Action Team Procedures

1. All individuals should be advised to present to/contact by phone the Assessment and Placement service directly, where a time for an appointment will be arranged and a comprehensive assessment will be undertaken. Following this assessment, a decision will be made as to the most appropriate course of action. Should this decision involve placement in emergency accommodation, the decision as to which service will be accessed will be the responsibility of the Assessment and Placement Officer and CCC Senior Management and will be made based on the persons local area connection, history, assessment and appropriateness of the need for emergency accommodation. Health and safety risks and concerns are also taken into consideration in the decision process regarding any placement made by the Homeless Action Team,

Contact can be made with the Homeless Action Team either by telephone or email to request or arrange an assessment with a member of the Assessment and Placement staff. Assessment Hours are as follows:

2. Should an individual present to a service provider during working hours i.e. 9-5pm, the individual should be referred to the Assessment and Placement service and the procedure outlined in point 1 will be followed and an assessment time allocated.
3. There is currently no out of hours service available within Co. Clare. However, should an individual or family seek information or support during this time from the emergency services or operating Homeless Services, contact will be made with the Homeless Action Team as soon as possible. Following this the APS stall will make contact with that individual/family where an assessment and support will be offered. The APS workers undertake an assessment and make a final decision on an any appropriate placement.
4. Referrals from other organisations, e.g. Care facilities, hospitals, prisons etc, must be made directly to the APS Team, and the local discharge policies for Mental Health and Acute Services must be adhered to.

5. Following any placement within our Homeless Services, each individual/family is assigned a key worker from the service provider. Engagement with this key worker is crucial and is expected from each individual. Responsibility to ensure this engagement is maintained lies with the client. Should this engagement not take place a meeting with the individual/family will need to take place in order to identify their plan to exit homeless services.

Client Contract/Termination of Emergency Accommodation.

Please see *Agreement between Emergency Accommodation service user and Clare County Council* below. Clare County Council will not offer emergency accommodation for a twelve-month period, if there are any breaches of the contract, which result in the service provider withdrawing emergency accommodation ie anti-social behaviour. Depending on the seriousness of the incident, Clare County Council will review each single/family presentation every three months following the initial twelve-month period.

Code of Conduct and agreement between the Emergency Accommodation service user and Clare County Council

Service User 1 Name: _____

(Please Print)

Service User 2 Name: _____
(If applicable)

(Please Print)

- You are required to use the accommodation offered. Failure to use the accommodation for one night will result in the Council withdrawing it: i.e., alternative accommodation will not be offered.
- No other people are permitted to stay in the accommodation without authorisation from the Council. Any visitors are only permitted in communal areas.
- Families/Individuals are required to comply with the House Rules of the establishment into which they are placed. The accommodation is to be kept in a clean and reasonable state.
- No alcohol or illegal drugs is to be brought onto the premises at any point during your stay. No tab to be made or room service availed of.
- Any anti-social behaviour or interference with other occupiers will result in the accommodation being withdrawn: alternative accommodation will not be offered for a twelve month period.
- Children are not to be left unattended in your room under any circumstances or unsupervised in communal areas.
- Individuals/Families must submit an application for Social Housing to CCC. Individuals/Families that do not meet the eligibility criteria for social housing will not be eligible for emergency accommodation and services will be withdrawn.
- Individuals/Families in Emergency Accommodation will be listed as Homeless on the CCC Housing List and will be eligible for social housing supports such as RAS, HAP, Leasing, Approved Housing Bodies accommodation and Council Tenancies.
- Offers of Housing to families/Individuals in Emergency Accommodation will be made where possible in their areas of choice. However, in the event of a suitable property not being available in an area of choice, offers may be made outside of this area. A refusal of any offer may result in withdrawal of emergency accommodation.
- I understand that my exit from Homeless Services is to private rented/HAP property or in exceptional circumstances Local Authority Housing or Approved Housing Bodies and any refusal of same or disengagement will result in the withdrawal of homeless services and accommodation.

While you are in Emergency Accommodation you will receive support to assist you regarding your housing need. This support may be from a staff within the service that you are residing in or social care staff from the Homeless Action Team. It is a requirement of your stay in Emergency Accommodation that:

- I agree to engage with the HAP service if in Emergency Accommodation and acknowledge that failure to engage will result in withdrawal of housing supports.
- I give my commitment to try and source private accommodation with the aid of HAP services or social care staff.
- I acknowledge where lack of effort to source accommodation or where anti-social behaviour is apparent, there will be withdrawal of emergency accommodation supports.

Breach of any of the above or any other incident deemed to be at variance with B&B/Hotel policy will result in immediate expulsion from the premises and no alternative accommodation will be offered by the accommodation provider.

Please Note: Damage to any items on B&B/Hotel premises will be chargeable.

Service User Signature: _____

Service User Signature: _____
(If applicable)

Witnessed by: _____
(Print)

Witness Signature: _____

Date: _____

Conditions of Stay in Emergency Accommodation: An agreement between the Emergency Accommodation Service User and Clare County Council.

Service User 1 Name: _____ **(Please Print)**

Service User 2 Name (if applicable) _____ **(Please Print)**

- Where applicable rent must be paid on time as required by the service provider
- You are required to use the accommodation offered. Failure to use the accommodation will result in the Council withdrawing it: i.e., alternative accommodation will not be offered. No more than 4 absences within a month.
- No other people are permitted to stay in the accommodation
- Emergency accommodation will cease if a valid offer of accommodation, including alternative Emergency Accommodation is refused. (In making an offer, all reasonable efforts will be made by to ensure that the accommodation meets the needs of the individual/family)
- Families/Individuals are required to comply with the House Rules of the service into which they are placed. The accommodation is to be kept in a clean and reasonable state.
- Clients will demonstrate that they are actively seeking all forms of alternative accommodation. Evidence may be requested to verify same. Emergency Accommodation will be withdrawn if engagement with support services is not demonstrated.
- Any anti-social behaviour or interference with other occupiers will result in the accommodation being withdrawn: alternative accommodation will not be offered for a twelve month period.
- Children are not to be left unattended in your room under any circumstances or unsupervised in communal areas.
- Violence/threat of violence towards staff or any other occupier will not be tolerated and will result in an immediate exclusion. Alternative Emergency Accommodation will not be offered.
- The use of illegal substance is not permitted on the premises. Selling or any association with dealing illegal substance is not tolerated. Should this take place an immediate exclusion will take place.
- Individuals/Families must submit an application for Social Housing to CCC. Individuals/Families that do not meet the eligibility criteria for social housing will not be eligible for emergency accommodation and services will be withdrawn.
- Individuals/Families in Emergency Accommodation will be listed as Homeless on the CCC Housing List and will be eligible for social housing supports such as RAS, HAP, Leasing, Approved Housing Bodies accommodation and Council Tenancies.
- I understand that my exit from Homeless Services is to private rented/HAP property or in exceptional circumstances Local Authority Housing or Approved Housing Bodies and any refusal of same or disengagement will result in the withdrawal of homeless services and accommodation.

If Emergency Accommodation is withdrawn due to non-compliance with Terms and Conditions, no alternative accommodation will be provided. Outreach community support services may continue to be made available in some instances.

Breach of any of the above will result in the immediate withdrawal of Homeless Accommodation and Supports. No alternative Accommodation or Supports will be offered by Clare County Council.

Support Services to Exit Homelessness, to include:

1. Clare H.A.T. Support Worker
2. Referral to appropriate Support Services.
3. Accommodation options that will be considered are Private Rented Accommodation via HAP Scheme/
RAS/AHB/Social Housing
4. HAP Place Finders Service
5. Access to Housing First when applicable.

Service User Signature: _____

Service User Signature: _____
(If applicable)

Witnessed by: _____
(Print)

Witness Signature: _____

Date: _____